Limitations on High-Level Photography in Southeast Asia
During the Summer Rainy Season

1. In general, throughout most of "Indochina" high-level photography will be severely limited during the period of June through September by the cloudy, rainy weather which is characteristic of the summer season in much of Southeast Asia. During this season, cloud bases tend to locate from 1,000 to 3,000 feet above the ground and build upward many thousands of feet. Consequently, any operation that requires visual reference to the ground can be performed more frequently and successfully at or below these levels than at higher levels.

2. In the interior areas, i.e., throughout much of the mountainous portion of Vietnam and most of Laos, local variations in cloud and visibility cause appreciable differences in the frequencies of favorable conditions for high level photography. ~~Generally, however,~~ Successful missions might be effected between 0800 and 1000 hours, after the low visibility of early morning has improved but before the development of the storm clouds.

3. Along the central Vietnam coast, as in the area of Vinh, excellent conditions for aerial photography occur periodically from June to August when strong westerly winds blow down from the summits of the interior mountains, causing dry weather with scant cloudiness and visibilities as great as 125 miles.

4. In the Tonkin Delta region of North Vietnam, good conditions for high-level photography will prevail on those occasions from July through September when a typhoon is located over the South China Sea east of 110°E longitude and north of 15°N latitude.

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5. The degree of cloud cover and/or visibility which exist at certain, generally representative locations during the summer months are given in the following tables. As the selection of locations is limited by the availability of statistics, Pleiku, a mountain town in South Vietnam, was of necessity selected for Table 3 as representative of conditions in the interior of "Indochina."

Table 1

Mean Number of Days Favorable for High-Level Visual Bombing* at Specified Hours for Selected Towns

		Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Nape	0600	0	1	0	2
(Route 8)	1300	2	1	1	2
Tchepone	0600	0	1	1	3
	1300	0	0	0	2
Hanoi	0600	2	2	2	4
	1300	2	2	2	4
Vinh	0600	4	3	2	5
	1300	4	3	4	6

* Total sky cover $\leq$ 3-tenths with visibility $\geq$ 2 1/2 miles. Visibility of more than the 2 1/2 mile minimum would be required for high-level photography.

Table 2

Mean Frequency (%) of Observations With Visibility < Specified Distances by Months and Hour

	Distance (Miles)	July 0600	July 1300	Sep 0600	Sep 1300
Luang Prabang	0.5	20	2	24	4
	1.0	37	4	35	5
	2.5	68	18	57	10
	6.0	89	33	73	15
Hanoi	0.5	0	0	2	1
	1.0	4	2	5	2
	2.5	10	4	14	3
	6.0	42	11	38	8
Vinh	0.5	0	0	3	0
	1.0	0	0	6	3
	2.5	2	1	13	6
	6.0	9	5	31	20

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Table 3

Mean Frequency (%) of Observations With
Ceiling Below Specified Altitudes by Month and Hour

	Altitude (Feet)	July 0600	July 1300	Sep 0600	Sep 1300
Pleiku	655	53	14	38	7
	983	71	21	53	11
	3280	89	89	73	77
	8201	91	91	75	86
Hanoi	655	3	1	5	0
	983	8	3	12	1
	3280	34	29	39	29
	8201	44	31	49	35
Vinh	655	1	0	6	3
	983	2	0	15	7
	3280	17	11	36	26
	8201	41	27	53	39

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